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2 February 1950

on Int. Committee

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Interview with Colonel Hammond and Dr. McKee of ID/GSUSA concerning the Watch Committee Proposal

REFERENCE: Memorandum for the DCI from the DDI/GSUSA dated 20 January 1950, Subject: Proposed Watch Committee

1. On Wednesday, 1 February 1950, I interviewed Colonel Hammond and Dr. McKee of ID/GSUSA to get the Army point of view which had prompted the proposal in the reference memorandum. Dr. McKee is the senior civilian consultant in ID and is also the Army Check List Officer. He turned out to be the guiding light for the proposal.

2. I discovered that ID does not want to do away with the Check List operation as such, but wishes to continue it as part of the much broader program. As currently conducted, ID feels that the operation is carried out in a vacuum, without a mission or instructions, without an outlet for its findings, and without recognition as a task which should receive a high priority in each participating agency. If CIA knows what it wants to receive in the way of proceeds from this operation, the knowledge is not shared elsewhere, as there has been no meeting of minds. Dr. McKee has missed two (if I remember correctly) meetings, because they were called on very short notice for days and hours when he could not be present. Hence, although he is highly interested in the success of the operation, he has been unable to participate as fully as he wished and has been proceeding unilaterally. By the way, the fact that Dr. McKee was designated as the Army Check List Officer indicates the importance attached by ID to this operation, since he is very highly regarded and is quite senior.

*that is up to each agency**How about an alternate then?*

3. What ID does desire is to establish machinery which will set in motion the whole cycle comprised by the G-2 Estimate/G-2 Plan concept. The proposed Watch Committee would consist of senior, key representatives from each participating agency, who would become the foci within their respective agencies for all the activities required to keep the cycle in motion. Collectively as the Watch Committee, they would become a sort of switchboard to centralize

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and coordinate the inter-agency communication and collaboration required as the impulse for the cycle. The Check List operation would become the tool of the Watch Committee, along with all the other facilities of the various agencies. The Watch Committee, as ID sees it, should have a definite mission with a high priority, based on a meeting of minds.

What does this mean?

4. In discussing the DCI/IAC relationship, I brought out very emphatically that it is the responsibility of the DCI, not the IAC, to produce national intelligence. I also pointed out that machinery is already provided for the production of coordinated national intelligence estimates, hence if any authorized agency desires periodic estimates on a certain subject as envisaged in the reference memorandum, all that is required is the submittal of a request upon CIA. Furthermore, in meeting his responsibility, whether in a crisis situation or otherwise, the DCI should be able to count on the advice and support of all the members of the IAC, who, for individual support have all the facilities of their own agencies, severally. In the sense of this line of reasoning, I showed that a Watch Committee would be an unnecessary adjunct.

5. In reply to my argument, Colonel Hammond and Dr. McKee began by acknowledging its truth but questioning its conclusions. They added that they had no designs upon the prerogatives of the DCI. They went on to develop a line of thought based on the concept that what we all want is a system that works. They feel that the creation of a cycle of observation, speculation, and prognosis aimed at our most likely enemy is deserving of considerable emphasis which cannot be obtained by relaxing into the routine. Specific individuals in each agency must be designated to keep the cycle in motion as a primary duty and as an inescapable commitment, otherwise the cycle will simply come to a halt, at least as a common effort, for lack of emphasis. These individuals must get together frequently, under the leadership of CIA, to exchange views and to collaborate. The concrete existence of an appropriate committee, created as the result of a meeting of minds, is the only way to achieve this. Conversely, a refusal to create such a committee can be interpreted only as a refusal to admit the importance of the purpose. Again, a committee such as ID proposes would, they believe, have the virtue of maintaining a meeting of minds throughout the operation of the cycle, as opposed to the routine method where a CIA opinion or draft would be submitted at intervals for inter-agency consideration in cold blood. Moreover, the maintenance of a continuous meeting of minds would facilitate the evaluation of crisis information because a common machinery for evaluation would provide the means for consideration. Each IAC member would, at all times and any time, be able to consider information against the background provided by all the facilities afforded by the agencies pertaining to the others.

Army's system? Let them do it.

Bunk.

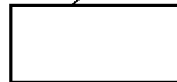
Why don't they attend meetings then?

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6. Although ID feels that the Watch Committee should be established by agreement, they are not adamant on form, and are of the opinion that a document of a lower grade than a DCID should suffice to record the agreement.

7. All in all, it seemed to me that the ID attitude was most reasonable. Their point of view emphasizes the necessity of a meeting of minds to produce team work for the purpose of attacking the most important problem of the national intelligence structure. In addition, they feel that purism should not be allowed to defeat the pragmatic, as long as the latter leads to sound results.



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